

*James Robert Redford 3/7/2017*  
*Director*



MICHIGAN VETERANS AFFAIRS AGENCY:  
HOUSE MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS BRIEFING

March 7, 2017

[MichiganVeterans.com](http://MichiganVeterans.com) | 1-800-MICH-VET



# About us

2

## **Gov. Rick Snyder created MVAA as a cabinet-level agency in 2013 to:**

- Connect veterans with local, state and federal benefits
- Eliminate barriers to education, jobs, health and quality of life

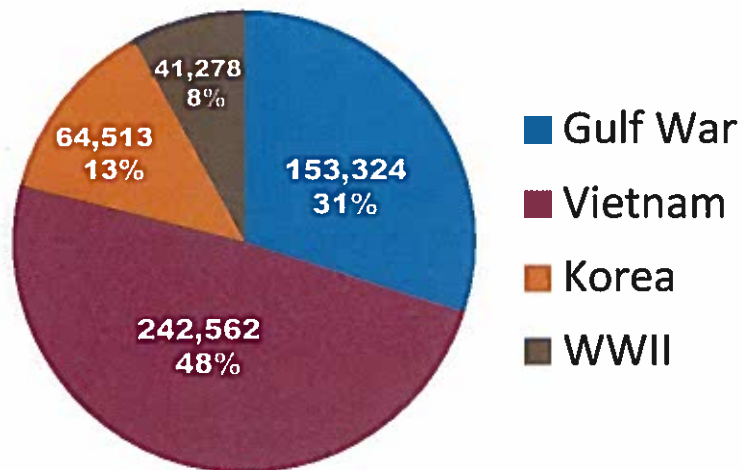




# Michigan's Veteran Population

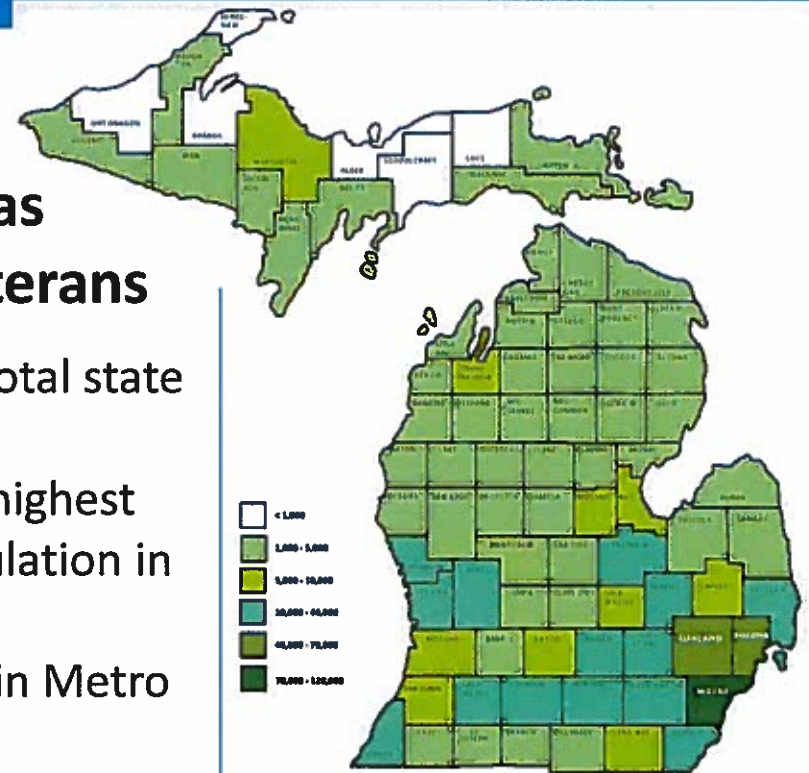
3

## Veteran population by conflict



## Michigan has 640,000 veterans

- 6.7% of the total state population;
- Ranked 11<sup>th</sup> highest veteran population in the U.S.
- 210,000 live in Metro Detroit;
- 46,000 are women; and
- 327,000 are 65 or older.





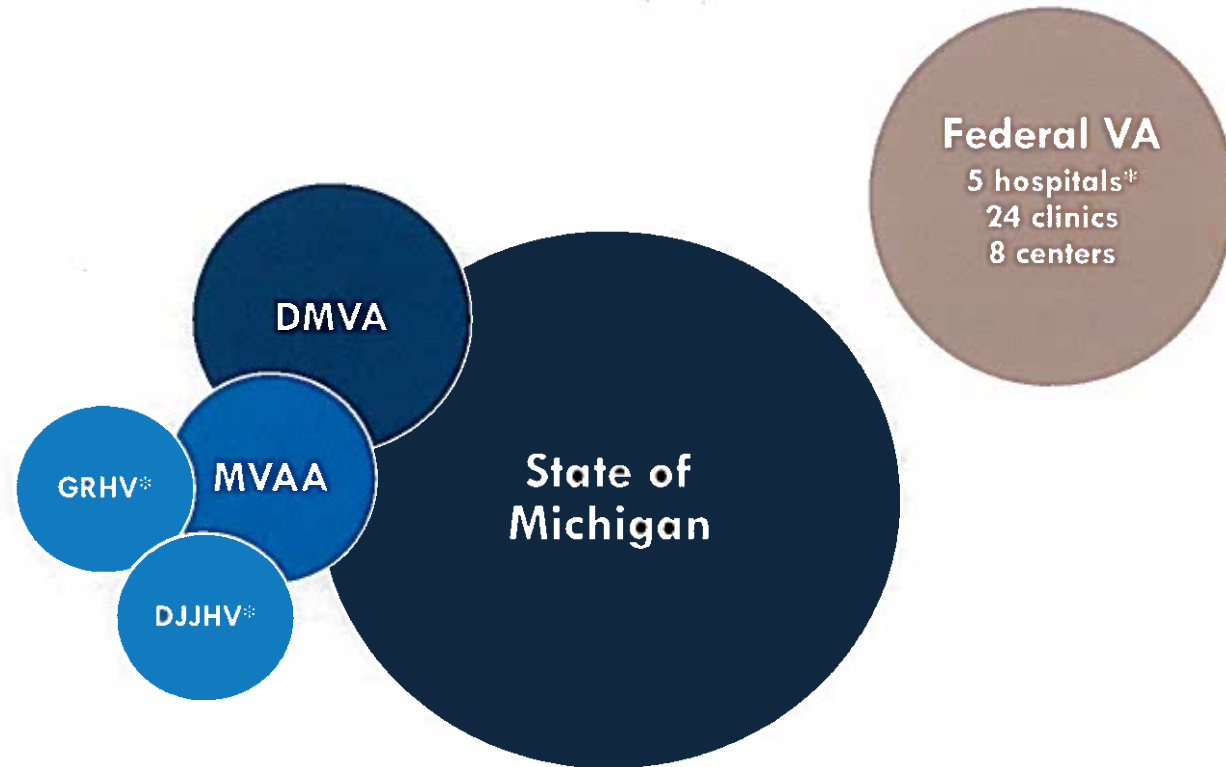


# Veteran services

4

\* MVAA runs two veteran long-term care facilities that will eventually move under the newly created Michigan Veteran Facilities Authority.

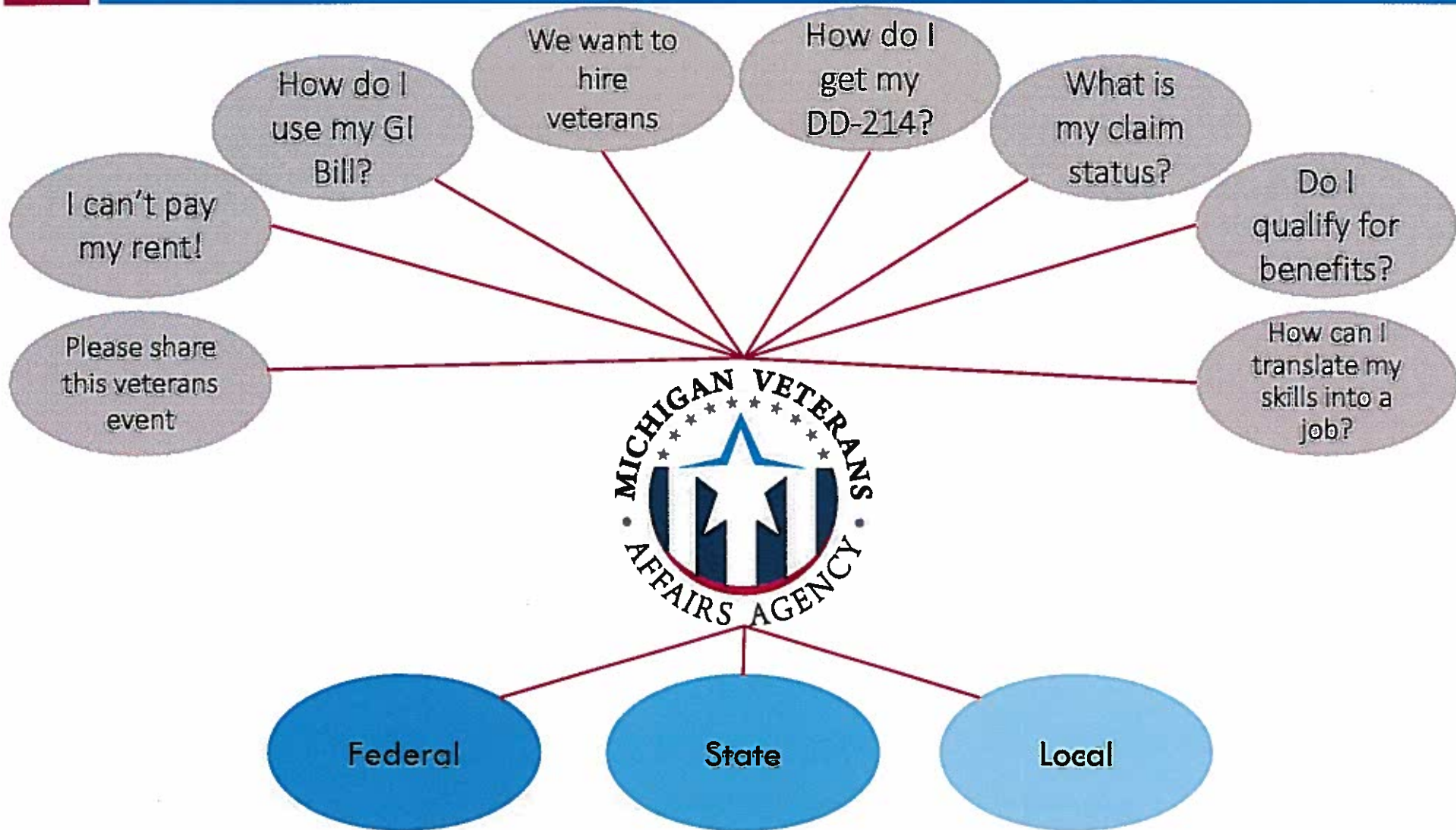
\* The VA has hospitals in Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Detroit, Iron Mountain and Saginaw.





# We help navigate the bureaucracy

5





# Award-winning service

6

*"Actors have Oscars. Live theater, the Tony Awards. Journalists receive Pulitzers and scientists Nobel Prizes. Now there is the Lincoln - for veterans."*

**- USA Today**



**MVAA received two 2016 Lincoln awards from  
the federal VA for its efforts to connect with veterans:**

- The Michigan Veterans Community Action Team (VCAT) is a community-based program that has brought together 1,187 organizations
- Michigan Veteran Resource Service Center is a one-stop program connecting veterans to federal, state and local services through a 24/7 toll-free helpline.



# Connecting with veterans

7

## Our philosophy: “No Wrong Door”

### Michigan Veteran Resource Service Center

MVAA’s 24/7 hotline to help veterans and their families with questions and emergency needs.

- 800-MICH-VET (800-642-4838)
- MichiganVeterans.com
- Facebook.com/MIVeterans
- Twitter: @MIVeteran







# Connecting with veterans

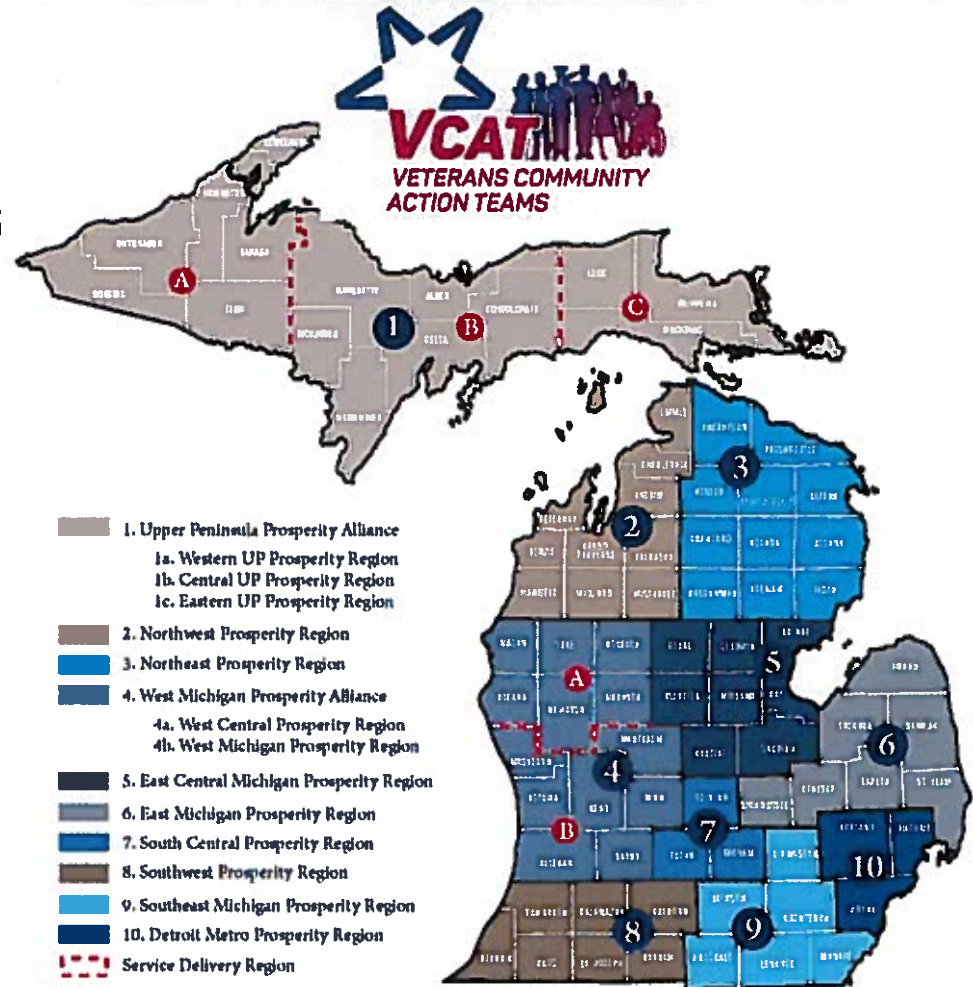
8

## Veterans Community Action Teams (VCATs)

- Grassroots coalitions of groups with a veteran component

## Regional Coordinators

- MVAA's representative to each region's VCAT
- Their goals:
  - Community collaboration
  - State, county and local government coordination
  - Veteran outreach







# Connecting with veterans

9

## Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency

- 5 accredited Veteran Service Officers, located in each veterans home, in the MVAA Lansing office and the Detroit Regional Benefits Office



## County Veterans Counselors

- 107 accredited counselors in 72 counties

## Michigan Veterans Coalition

- 65 accredited officers



Paralyzed Veterans  
of America



# MVAA initiative: Employment

10

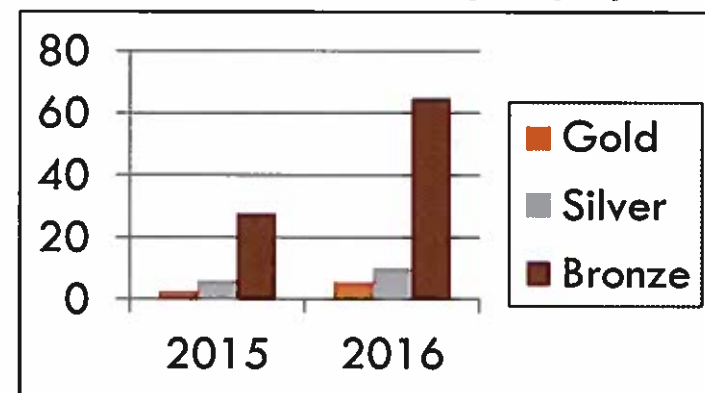
## Veteran-Friendly Employer program

- Provides training and webinars for employers
- Helps employers recruit, train and retain veterans
- Recognizes veteran-friendly employers

### As of February 2017:

- 6 gold-level VFEs
- 8 silver-level VFEs
- 65 bronze-level VFEs

Number veteran-friendly employers





# State benefits: Employment

11

## Transitioning to the workplace

For many professions, the state waives fees and allows the transfer of military experience for licensing. Examples:

### Experience waiver

- Electrician
- Residential builder
- Plumber

### Fee waiver

- Mechanical Contractor
- Firefighter







# MVAA initiative: Education

12

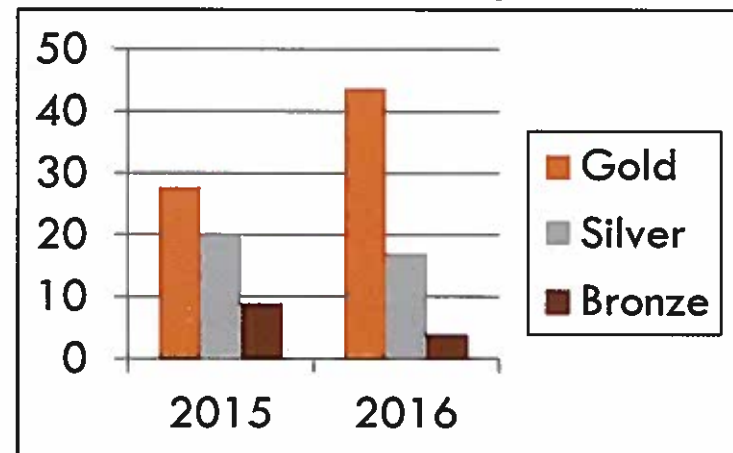
## Veteran-Friendly Schools

MVAA identifies schools with such services as websites, student clubs, career advisors, academic resources and other services specific to veterans' needs.

## Growing commitment

- 2015 - 57 schools (28 gold, 20 silver, 9 bronze)
- 2016 - 65 schools (44 gold, 17 silver, 4 bronze)

Number veteran-friendly schools





# MVAA initiative: Health Care

13

## Ensuring veterans get the care they deserve

- Educating veterans about pension benefits and presumptive diseases
  - Example: Many Iraq and Afghanistan veterans should be on the burn pit registry
- Improving access to mental health services
- Promoting best practices like Spectrum Health's vet navigator program





# MVAA initiative: Quality of life

14

## MVAA helps veterans thrive by:

- Informing them if they qualify for recreational opportunities, veteran drivers license/license plate discounts, property tax waivers, and other state-sponsored benefits
- Coordinating a prisoner re-entry program with DOC
- Educating law enforcement on veteran mental health issues
- Producing a manual for Michigan's 25 veteran treatment courts
- Fighting homelessness







# State benefits: Quality of life

15

## Michigan Veterans Trust Fund

- \$50 million trust fund established after WWII
- For housing, utility and other emergent needs
- For war-time veterans

## FY 2016

- \$988,502 in grants
- 985 grants awarded
- Grew the corpus by \$2.56 million
- Total current corpus: \$55 million





# State benefits: Veterans homes

16

## Caring for aging and disabled veterans

- Grand Rapids Home for Veterans – 360 members
- D.J. Jacobetti Home for Veterans – 175 members
- The Michigan Veterans Health System (part of MVAA) provides long-term and domiciliary care
- The Legislature passed bills in December moving the operations of these and future facilities under an authority in 2017





Resource Center: 800-MICH-VET (800-642-4838)

General email: [MVAAResourceCenter@michigan.gov](mailto:MVAAResourceCenter@michigan.gov)

On the Web: [michiganveterans.com](http://michiganveterans.com)



@MIVeteran



/MIVeterans